From: Norbert T. Rempe

To: BRC

Subject: Fw: Blue Ribbon Commisssion, information on radioactive waste repositories, etc. - IXOS DOE-Ixos-Archive 305 KB

Date: Monday, March 22, 2010 10:08:30 PM

Good evening Mr. Frazier,

In the interest of covering all bases, I am forwarding you the e-mail below with the attachment above that I originally sent on March 8, 2010, to those members of the Commission whose e-mails I could find on the Internet.

Because I am unable to attend the meeting in person, please accept the content the message below as an individual statement of comments and suggestions to the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future for their meeting on March 25-26,

2010.

Norbert T. Rempe

1403 N. Country Club Circle

Carlsbad, NM 88220

575-885-3836 (home phone)

575-234-8956 (work phone)

norbert.rempe@wipp.ws (work)

For information on the WIPP and New Mexico geology:

http://www.wipp.energy.gov/

http://geoinfo.nmt.edu/tour/home.html

http://www.eos.ubc.ca/public/resources/slidesets/guad/slidefiles/guadc0.html

http://strata.geol.sc.edu/Nassir-Thesis-SITE/CHAPT08.html

--- On Mon, 3/8/10, Norbert T. Rempe <rempent@yahoo.com wrote:

From: Norbert T. Rempe <rempent@yahoo.com

Subject: Blue Ribbon Commisssion, information on radioactive waste repositories, etc.

To: rempent@yahoo.com

Cc: carol.matthews@hq.doe.gov, congress@indiana.edu, lee.hamilton@wilsoncenter.org, acarnesale@ucla.edu, ejmoniz@mit.edu, peterson@nuc.berkeley.edu

Date: Monday, March 8, 2010, 8:32 PM

Good morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

This message is intended for members and staff of the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future. Since I was unable to find e-mail addresses for everybody, I request you share it with your colleagues. I suggest four introductory points for your consideration:

First, I offer factual information on the final disposal and permanent underground isolation of radioactive waste. Geologic isolation has been accomplished during the past 50 years in facilities that either used to operate or continue to do so in the present.

I first visited a deep geologic repository for waste containing dangerous materials with infinite half-lives in 1973. I have since then contributed numerous articles, presentations, and one book (as editor) to the technical and scientific literature on related subjects.

A review article published in the Journal "Progress in Nuclear Energy" about former and still existing repositories is attached. Information on the book I edited (published by the Geological Society of America) is available at

http://books.google.com/books?

id=wAHdBDxJXrgC&printsec=frontcover&dq=Rempe,+repositories&source=bl&ots=CmwSZoMkEZ&sig=X66rP6rptdaUfenmIrNkLkCbYi0&hl=en&ei=1rSVS4u1CZCCNKiPuIIK&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CAYQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=&f=false

and at

http://www.geosociety.org/bookstore/default.asp?oID=0&catID=11&pID=REG019

Second, if and when you consider estimates of remaining uranium or thorium resources, please keep in mind that the history of forecasting the availability of any mineral

resource is dismal. According to professional estimates, the world should have run out of petroleum and many other natural resources within 20-30 years of any prognosis ever published. For supporting references I recommend the books by the late Julian Simon and the more recent book by Steven M. Gorelick: "Oil Panic and the Global Crisis." We simply never know how much we have; but if history is any guide, we always have much more than we estimate.

Third, when addressing anything nuclear or radioactive, please look beyond current regulatory straitjackets on radiation protection and evaluate real risk v. benefit, real v. assumed regulatory risk, and absolute v. relative risk. Let yourselves be guided by the advice from Bruce N. Ames: "Putting huge amounts of money into minuscule hypothetical risks damages public health by diverting resources and distracting the public from major risks."

Fourth, when considering disposal of high-level radioactive waste, keep an open mind about the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP). I have not been able to find a convincing scientific or technical reason why WIPP could not host high-level waste in addition to transuranic waste. The Germans, before their past government decided to get out of nuclear energy, were unable to identify any convincing flaw to dismiss their Gorleben salt dome site. WIPP is situated close to the principal potash mines in the U.S, two of which intercepted an igneous dike that offers a local analogue for the behavior of a heat source inside rock salt.

I offer you continued assistance to the best of my ability.

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